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At the present time the Cayapa, in common with most rural Ecuadorians, practice a ceremony of nail cutting that has ritual significance in the sense that god-parents are selected for the child, and the extension of ritual kinship follows as for the rites of baptism and marriage. This ceremonial occasion which is called simply /tyákikánu/, is a very minor ceremony that may be performed at almost any age from a few months to perhaps six years, or it may never be performed. Almost invariably the god-parents for this occasion are Negro. As Negroes are in political and economic control of the region, we can say that this is a vertical extension of ritual kinship. The Indian seldom asks a Negro to assume this obligation. Quite the contrary, Negroes generally ask the father of the child if he would like to enter into compadrazgo.

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The actual ceremony is very simple. Only the participants are present as a rule. The nails are cut by the god-father, and the parings are placed in a glass of rum which is then drunk by the compadres. Small presents, such as a bottle of rum, some food, soft drinks, and tobacco, are exchanged. Thereafter, the

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relationship of greatest importance is that between the compadres and not between the /kumbatípa/ and /kumbatíma/, that is 'god-father' and 'god-mother,' and the god-child or /ihádu/. The compadres refer to each other as /kopáre/ or /komáre/. The relationship thus set up is utterly without sanction from the Church, and in point of fact, the parties, if they are Negro and Indian, do not feel that they are actually tied to each other ritually.

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Quite often the Negro who asks to be permitted to cut the child's nails is a travelling merchant who, from time to time, visits the area. It is to his advantage to have an Indian compadre as this assures him of a place to eat and to sleep in his travels. Similarly, if the Negro lives near a town, the Cayapa compadre will visit him occasionally. Indians going to Esmeraldas, for example, may stay for several days in the home of a Negro compadre. Very often the Negro asks to cut the nails of a Cayapa child for pecuniary reasons so that, for example, the banana merchants seek to extend their compadre ties to as many banana growers as they can. Sometimes the Negro attempts to establish previously

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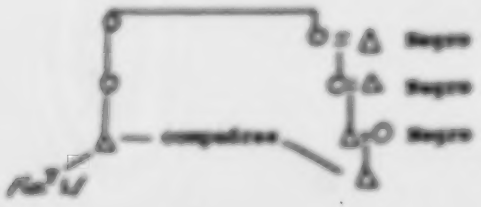
existing kinship ties by means of the nail-cutting ceremony with a Cayapa child. As an example, one Negro who is distantly related to the ʔiwʔi of the Punta Venado section asked if he could be his compadre. The manner of relationship is as follows:



The ʔiwʔi says that he does not know the name of this Negro kinsman and compadre who lives by the ocean near Punta Bajo on the other side of Limones at the mouth of the Río Cayapa. He came up one day in his canoe, bringing fish, green coconuts, clams, and other small gifts. He asked if he could cut the nails of one of the children, and the ʔiwʔi agreed, and the Negro cut the nails of the daughter, María Agreceria. The ʔiwʔi gave his new compadre gifts of sugar cane, plantain, and chontaduro. Since then, the ʔiwʔi had visited his compadre about ten times in a four- or five-year period, and in return

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he has been visited about four times. There is no work at all involved in these visits, which are said to be purely social.

Sometimes an Indian will ask to be a compadre so that, for example, the /kaʔi/'s daughter, Maria Rosa had her nails cut by the father-in-law of the /kaʔi/'s eldest brother's daughter. She lived in Río Bravito area. Her daughter was ill on occasion, and her father-in-law came up to the Río Canarmoro to ask Gabriel who was not yet the /kaʔi/ to come and cure the child. He went down with his family and stayed for about one week. While there a brother-in-law of his niece asked if he could cut the nails of his daughter. When asked why the man had asked to do this, Gabriel replied, "Because he likes me very much." In this case we find a reinforcement of a previously existing relationship. Most children have their nails ceremonially cut, and each child in a family has different god-parents. The picture is one of a multiplicity of compadres extended vertically and horizontally. The emphasis in ceremonial nailcutting is primarily vertical and generally involves Negroes. Indians who seek compadrazgo are usually related

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distantly by marriage and who, for one or another reason, seek to intensify a weak relationship. The important relationship is between the compadres and not between the sponsor and the child.

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Baptism. Every infant must be baptized as soon as possible by the priest. The god-parents chosen for this occasion are always Indian. Although some say that it is best to choose them from within the family, others claim that it is best to choose non-relatives. There are no strong feelings one way or another; however, most of my material indicates a bias in favor of having relatives as compadres of the baptism. A statistical treatment is not possible as my data center primarily on the Río Camerones region and not on the Punta Venado group as a whole.

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For the baptism the parents, the god-parents, and the infant go to Limones. The ceremony which is done in the Catholic manner by the priest costs ten sucres which is paid by the father of the child. The priest is usually presented with a gift, such as a fan or a basket, made by the Cayapa. At this time no presents are exchanged between the compadres, although

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